



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
[www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/659,915	09/11/2000	Thomas E. Saulpaugh	5181-63600	5717
7590	03/26/2004		EXAMINER	
Robert C Kowert Conley Rose & Tayon PC P O Box 398 Austin, TX 78767-0398			FISHER, MICHAEL J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3629	

DATE MAILED: 03/26/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>
	09/659,915	SAULPAUGH ET AL.
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>
	Michael J Fisher	3629

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-50 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-50 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:
    1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
    3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)                     |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ .   |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____ . | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
|  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ .                                   |

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

Claims 1-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Waldo et al. (Waldo).

As to claims 1,12,24,33,41,46, Waldo discloses a method and apparatus for managing a lease (claim 1), where the client has access to a resource (that which is leased), a client process (the data processing system that manages the lease on behalf of the client, as discussed in claim 1), a client endpoint (the client is shown to able to send messages to and receive them from the network service (as discussed in the abstract), further sending a lease renewal message (claim 7), it would be inherent that upon leasing a service the client has access to the service.

Art Unit: 3629

Waldo does not, however, teach having the system automatically sending the message. It is well settled in case law that to automate a process is well within the skill of one of ordinary skill in the art (in Re Venner and Bowser 120 USPQ 192 (CCPA 1598)), therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to automate notifying the customer that the lease will soon expire to ensure that the client is notified in case a person forgets to send the notice.

As to claims 2,13,25, the lease is renewed upon receiving a lease renewal message (claim 9).

As to claims 3,4,26,27,34,35,42,43,47, the lease access is obtained for a first period and upon lease renewal, access is granted for a second period (claim 9), these are accomplished by messages.

As to claims 5,14, lease periods are negotiable so the lease period could be the same or shorter.

As to claims 6,7,28,29, leases are negotiable so the users could be specified by the customer, whether shared or exclusive.

As to claims 8,9,16,20,21,30,38,48, the lease renewal notice would be an advertisement and would, inherently, contain an address to respond to.

As to claims 10,22,31,39,44,49, it would be inherent that the messages are in a data representation language as they represent data.

As to claims 11,23,32,40,45,51, XML is well known in the art to be used for computer messages and therefore this is not patentably distinct.

As to claim 15, the message specifies the granted lease period (claim 6).

- Art Unit: 3629

As to claim 17, the message endpoint would do so in accordance with a description of the lease renewal message (claim 9).

As to claim 18, the messages would, inherently, be sent to an address where it could be received by the client.

As to claims 19,37, the message is shown to be over a network between computers, the Internet is such a network and therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use the Internet, and corresponding URL, to send messages so as to not need the customer to be on an expensive, exclusive network as it is well known to connect computers to the Internet.

### ***Conclusion***

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. US PAT 6,463,446 to Wollrath et al., Wollrath et al. disclose a method of event notification that could be used to renew a lease.

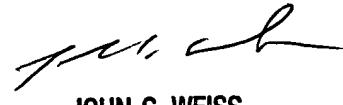
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael J Fisher whose telephone number is 703-306-5993. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri. 7:30am-5:00pm alt Fri. off.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 3629

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

MF  
3/22/04

  
JOHN G. WEISS  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600